

Panama City Pilot

Vol. 1.

Panama City, Washington County, Florida, June 13th. 1907.

No. 3.

Beach Combings.

Mr G. W. Ward of the Panama City Mill Co., came in on Wednesday Tarpon.

Mrs McMillan and children of Caryville, Fla., are visiting Mr W. Prows, at Millville.

The Tarpon arrived from Pensacola at 10 a. m. yesterday with a full cargo of miscellaneous freight.

Mr W. A. Rogers, of West Bay, with the Gladys, brought Mr. J. Davis, of Freeport, to Panama City yesterday morning.

Born to Mr and Mrs Brooks, of Millville, on Monday morning, twin boys. Dr Lee was in attendance. All are reported doing well.

A colored man named William Brown, was killed at Millville on Thursday last, by a car running over him which he was trying to stop.

Owing to the breaking of the mandrel on the big saw at the mill here, Tuesday evening, that portion of the mill will have to shut down for a week or so. The planing mill will however be run.

Mr F. M. Boutelle having accepted a position in the Parker postoffice, which will take his entire time, has given up the painting business. Mr Boutelle was an expert with the brush, and we dislike to lose him from that profession.

McKenzie Bros., have received their full equipment of machinery, syrup, &c., and before our next issue will be putting out the choicest, purest drinks that are manufactured anywhere. Send in your orders for a sample case.

For the benefit of many enquiries we wish to state that No. 1 of the Pilot can no longer be obtained at this office, the issue having been exhausted. Those having copies would do well to preserve them, so that parties wishing to keep files can obtain this first number.

The tug Simpson with a large barge loaded with more machinery for the G. A. L. Co., Millville, came in yesterday noon. The barge Thomas Clooney loaded with the scrap from the burned mill, was in readiness to be towed to Pensacola on the return trip of the Simpson, which was begun yesterday afternoon.

A party from Eufaula, Ala., consisting of Col A. H. Merrill, President of the East Alabama National Bank, and a prominent attorney of east Alabama, accompanied by his wife, Dr W. P. Copeland, and Mr Will McCormick, of the Eufaula Grocery Co., were guests at the Panama City hotel from Saturday until Monday.

Mr J. A. Elder, Panama City's successful gardener, brought to McKenzie & Bros. store this week such a display of vegetables as are seldom seen anywhere. They consisted of summer squashes, cucumbers, turnips, cabbage, and red and white radishes, and no choicer vegetables in size or quality are raised by the market gardeners of our large cities.

The presiding elder of this district, Rev. J. A. Peterson, of Dothan, Ala., accompanied by his wife and child, will arrive on the north bay mail boat Friday night, to participate in the Quarterly Conference which is to be held here Saturday and Sunday. The ladies of the society here have planned for a dinner for those in attendance, which will be served on the tables in Magnolia Park immediately after the 11 a. m. service.

Again this week our community have been hampered in business, and subjected to other inconveniences, through the non arrival of the mail from the railway. Tuesday evening the mail did not reach St Andrew until 11 p. m., too late to be handled at that office. At Bay points. Parties here having important letters in that mail, tried to get the postmaster at St Andrew to allow the contractor on this route to bring a pouch here, from there, Wednesday forenoon, at their expense, but the P. M. did not see his way clear under the rules to allow this. Between the inefficiency, and the red tape of the P. O. Department, the inhabitants of the Bay country are most assuredly between the devil and the deep sea as regards postal facilities.

SAINT ANDREWS BAY!

Atlanta & Saint Andrews Bay Rail Road.

Panama City and Its Future

THE PILOT herewith places before its readers an outline map copied from the Century Atlas, showing as clearly and correctly as possible on such a large scale, the tactical advantage possessed by St Andrews Bay as a gateway for the future commerce of the most important extent of territory in the United States.

The 85th meridian of longitude bisects the wealthiest agricultural, mineral and timber portion of our country, and this meridian runs but a few miles east of Panama City and St Andrews Bay. A section of country bounded by lines one hundred miles each side of this meridian, extending from the Canadian border to the Gulf, will include many of the most important inland cities, not equalled by any others in volume or value of business transacted.

Starting at the "Soo" there is included in this territory such centres of population and business activity as Milwaukee, Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Evansville, Cincinnati, Louisville, Nashville, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Birmingham, Macon, Columbus, Montgomery, and numerous smaller cities; the marvelous mineral districts of Alabama; the now only remaining valuable timbered portion of the country east of the Rocky mountains, and an agricultural region that has no equal as to the fertility or diversification of its products.

Following this meridian of longitude southward from St Andrews Bay, we find it passing just to the westward of Cuba, being the shortest course to and from Colon. It also makes our bay the nearest port on the north Gulf coast for the Atlantic trade through the Florida straits.

Pensacola bay, the only other natural deep water harbor on the north Gulf coast, lies over one hundred and thirty miles west of this meridian, and commerce from the district outlined taking a gulf route through that port would have to suffer the added cost of this additional distance. With the present trimming in the cost of all transportation charges, not only for the benefit of the producer and consumer, but that our commerce may compete with other nations, the matter of the cost of a hundred miles of additional railway or steamship transportation is a vital item in the business.

With the increase of manufacturing and mining, which have made a most wonderful record in the lower portion of the territory mentioned, came the extension of railways to the Gulf, and the growth of an import and export trade that though now large, is nothing in comparison to what it will be in a very short time.

Until very recently the Illinois Central was the only system having a line from north to south connecting the great lakes with the Gulf. The prosperity of that and other joint lines, together with the trend of shipments of all kinds through gulf ports, have made railway managers everywhere recognize the importance of extending their roads in this direction, and securing terminals at available ports on the Mexican gulf. That this is the natural minimum grade route for export freight must be admitted by any one who will study the grades of those roads running east and west over the Alleghany mountains, which formerly handled the entire Atlantic trade.

It is an inevitable law of the transportation business that grades increase the cost of haul, consequently the lines with the least grades have the advantage, making a profit at rates that the older and possibly stronger lines cannot operate on. Again it is only within the past few years that science, coupled with the indomitable energy of the American merchant, has made it possible to ship through the gulf ports everything that may be shipped through the northern seaports.

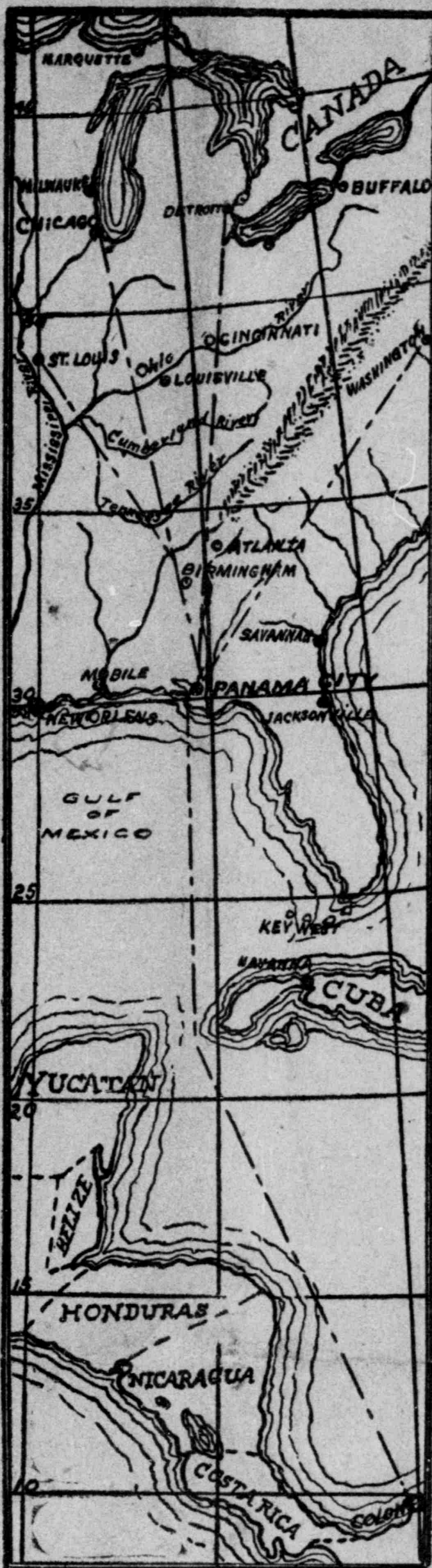
It is also within this same period that the lower South has achieved such prominence through the demand for its untouched forest products. In connection with the lumbermans operations came the building of log roads, soon to be transformed into standard railroads, and as has always been the case with the extension of such roads they carried with them the settlement of the contiguous country; in the lower South by those homeseekers who find in this genial climate cheap lands and relief from the cold, and the costly living of the more rigorous North.

Railroads are, and always have been the great pioneers, striking out through undeveloped forests and plains, making a region for twenty miles each side of their line accessible to all the world, and all the world accessible to the settlers therein; building up villages and cities where none existed before, and increasing the value and taxable property of the country they pass through as no other factor can or ever has done.

With the extension of these railways toward the shores of the gulf, came renewed interest in St Andrews Bay, a grand body of deep water having a five fathom and upward anchorage of over thirteen miles in length; twice the capacity of Pensacola bay; and which though charted by the Government as far back as 1855, has never received any attention at its hands.

A few far sighted railway men however have foreseen the possibilities and probabilities of this body of water as the future port for the vast territory outlined above, and for the business that is rapidly turning gulfward, with the enormous increase in traffic that must come with the opening of the Panama Canal, and closer trade connections with Central and South America, Asia, and the islands of the Pacific, and many lines have been proposed with their gulf terminal at Panama City. That they will eventually be built is just as certain as that to-morrow will come.

But railway bodies move slow; and now when as regards traffic the times are propitious for the extension of lines to this point, and the opening up



of this harbor to the commerce of the world, the stringency in the money market precludes the borrowing of such sums as are required to do the work, therefore some plans must be held in abeyance until there comes a change in that direction. Yet even in such stringent times as these there are found men of sterling integrity and indomitable perseverance who will not be brooked in their schemes, and in spite of a close money market, and discouragements that would down less strenuous men, keep pressing on with their plans, working while others are idle, and accomplishing results that spell success, while those who have adopted a waiting policy stand by lamenting the unfavorable conditions, and burying their talents in the ground.

It was fortunate for this section of the country that at such a critical time the Atlanta & St Andrews Bay R. R., the Panama City line, had at its head one of those self made, indomitable men, who stand as beacon lights amid the vacillating masses, leading their followers to success, giving to all with whom they come in contact some portion of their own enthusiasm, bringing order out of chaos, and doing a work in pioneering and developing the country that ranks them as public benefactors, and leaders in the New South.

Such a man is Mr A. B. Steele, President of the A. & St. A. B. R. R., and of the Enterprise Lumber Co., a resident of Atlanta, Ga., a man who has passed through all the vicissitudes that have been the portion of those who have been prominent in railroad building, and developing the lumber business in the lower south, and who has succeeded where others have failed. He is credited with the building of three successful, short railways, all of which are now portions of trunk lines; of being at the head of one of the largest lumber company's of Alabama; and with a perseverance under all difficulties that has caused his friends and acquaintances to accept as accomplished facts any proposed enterprise that he might engage in.

He was one of those who foresaw that an air line from Atlanta, and the wealthy country of western Georgia and eastern Alabama to a gulf port would soon be a necessity, and in connection with his lumber interests in South Alabama and West Florida began to plan for such a line. The possibilities of an air line route through this territory soon eclipsed his lumber interests, and his energies were turned toward the more important object of giving the territory referred to a short and direct outlet to the gulf. A glance at the map of the A. & St. A. B. R. R., and connections therewith, as printed on our third page, will show how nearly this has been accomplished.

Running almost due north and south, this road will become a trunk line of no mean importance. Its connections at junction points are such as will give it a very prominent position, and interchange of business with those roads seeking the most direct route to a gulf port. At Cottondale it connects with the east and west line of the L. & N.; at Dothan with the Central of Georgia from the northeast and southwest; and with the Atlantic Coast Line from Montgomery; while its northern extension from Dothan to Opelika will cross a branch of the A. C. L.; three branches of the Central of Georgia; and at Opelika will connect with the Atlanta & West Point R. R. for Atlanta, and with the Central of Georgia for Birmingham. Such are the railroad connections assured Panama City upon the completion of the Atlanta & St Andrews Bay R. R., and to these various roads and their numerous connections will be secured a gulf port, that for export and import trade by the shortest possible route cannot be equalled.

No more prosperous or richer agricultural and timbered country, with numerous cotton and other manufactures exists, than that lying within fifty miles each side of the A. & St. A. B. R. R. in lower Alabama and Georgia. Within that district are to be found such cities as Geneva, Florala, Dothan, Troy, Columbia, Eufaula, Montgomery, and Opelika, Alabama; and Colquitt, Blakely, Fort Gaines, Cussetta, and Columbus, Ga.; together with a host of smaller but thriving villages. The short line to Panama City offers to this large and prosperous section in the way of an outlet for their products, principally cotton, such a route as will give it the advantage over other less favorably situated portions of the cotton growing and manufacturing section of the south; it will increase the value of all kinds of property, tending to bring under cultivation much valuable land now idle, thus largely and rapidly increasing the value of this entire region.

Panama City recognizes that the building of this road means that our city, located most favorably directly in front of the harbor entrance, with its railroad owning an abundance of suitable land for terminal yards, and a water front of over a quarter of a mile in length, from which wharfs can be built, must be such a city as will fulfill all the requirements of a gateway for such a country, and its many railroads, as has been described, and care for a traffic that is solely and rightfully all its own. And those who have the interest of this city in charge through carrying out a well devised plan of promotion and upbuilding, are striving to not disappoint the many who are looking toward this place as the coming metropolis of the northeast gulf coast.

Henry Bovis Dead.

The citizens of this section of the bay country were greatly shocked yesterday afternoon to hear that Mr Henry Bovis, of Millville, had met death at his own hands, while temporarily insane.

Mr Bovis was one of the pioneers in the mill business at Millville, and after selling out his interests therein took up the mercantile business in which, and as postmaster at Millville, he was engaged at the time of his death. He had been very successful in a business way accumulating quite an amount of property. He leaves a widow and eight children, one son, and seven daughters, four of which are married. Justice Sturrock held an inquest late yesterday afternoon, while Undertaker A. H. Brake embalmed the remains to await the funeral, the date of which has not been set.

Quite a number of the bay people have expressed a desire that some arrangement be made for a general picnic and gathering in Magnolia Park at this place, on July 4th. As before stated our citizens are willing to make suitable preparations for such a celebration if it be the wishes of any great number that we do so. Let there be a quick and concerted action in this matter, as the time is now getting short in which the preliminary work must be done.

A gang of men in charge of Mr Sam Welch have this week completed the opening of 5th street from the bayou to the bay shore, where it intersects the grade of the railway. One can now see how Panama City along this street will look from the railway terminus. The crew are now at work clearing out Grace Avenue between 4th and 5th street.

Wednesday morning our people received quite an amount of mail which had been missent by the distributing office at St Andrew, to Parker, returning here Tuesday night. Mixing mails is as productive of profanity as mixing drinks, and in behalf of those of our citizens who are trying to keep from swearing, we would ask that the post office authorities at St Andrews to be more careful in the future.

Mr R. L. McKenzie and E. M. Goodson, on Friday last, spent a short time fishing on Mill creek, near where the railway grading is going on, capturing trout, or large mouth black bass, and other fresh water fish, the result being a string of fish that would have driven Issack Walton wild with envy. They state there are large mouth bass there that would weigh from 8 to 10 pounds each. As the PILOT did not receive any of the fish caught this fish story must be taken as the unbiased truth.

Mr R. M. Henderson, of Millville, was a Panama City caller on Tuesday.